

BLANCHE:

MY MOTHER WAS Evelyn Perkins and she was born up at Slocomslade, above Brendon. She used to walk to Brendon School from there, three miles each way I think it was, and with a big climb too. She would stop off on the way back and watch John Floyd the woodcarver in his workshop opposite Oaklands. She told me that there was often a little group of kids standing at the open door, watching him work. They'd almost always stop there until he got fed up with them and sent them on their way.

Her mum, my Grandma Perkins, was from Rockford and my Great-Grandma Sloley was from Rockford too, and she used to deliver all the babies in the area; she was the local midwife. I don't know how it all started, perhaps at that time if they were interested they just took it on.

Probably she learnt through doing it.

She used to arrive at the house where a baby was due with all the things she needed in a basket, and the children in the house were always told that their new brother or sister would be coming in this very basket. That's where they thought all babies came from in those days: Great-Grandma Sloley's basket!



*This is one of the earliest pictures we have, and is on a glass plate. Great-Grandma Sloley is in the middle, holding the child. She delivered all the babies in Rockford. And my Grandma Perkins is on the left of the picture, with her family round her. It must have been taken somewhere in Rockford in the 1890s or 1900s.*